

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An automatic focusing control apparatus having a focusing lens and an image pickup sensor, comprising:

an image pickup section configured to pick up an image of a subject in synchronization with the cycle of an image vertical synchronizing signal in a cycle which is one-Nth $[\frac{1}{N}]$, N being an integer $[\]$, of the cycle of the image vertical synchronizing signal;

a calculation section configured to calculate a focus evaluation value for performing automatic focusing based on an image pickup signal picked up by said image pickup section;

a changing section configured to change the distance between said focusing lens and said image pickup sensor based on the focus evaluation value calculated by said calculation section; and

a synthesis section configured to synthesize a plurality of image pickup signals picked up by said image pickup section, the synthesis section synthesizing the picked up plurality of image signals into an image signal of one field or selecting one of the picked up plurality of image signals,

wherein the cycle of the image vertical synchronizing signal and N times $[\frac{1}{N}]$, N being an integer $[\]$, the cycle in which the focus evaluation value is calculated by said

calculation section are synchronized with each other, and A times, $[[()A \text{ being an integer}()]]$, the cycle of the image vertical synchronizing signal and B times, $[[()B \text{ being an integer}()]]$, the cycle in which the distance is changed by said changing section are synchronized with each other where the integer A and the integer B satisfy a relationship of $B > A$.

2. (Original) The automatic focusing control apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein said calculation section calculates the focus evaluation value based on a high-frequency component of a luminance signal of the image pickup signal.

3. (Original) The automatic focusing control apparatus as set forth in claim 1, wherein said synthesis section synthesizes image pickup signals determined in advance from among the plural image pickup signals picked up by said image pickup section.

4. (Currently Amended) An automatic focusing control method for an automatic focusing control apparatus having a focusing lens and an image pickup sensor, comprising:
an image pickup step of picking up an image of a subject in synchronization with the cycle of an image vertical synchronizing signal in a cycle which is one-Nth, $[[()N \text{ being an integer}()]]$, of the cycle of the image vertical synchronizing signal;
a calculation step of calculating a focus evaluation value for performing automatic focusing based on an image pickup signal picked up by the process at the image pickup step;

a changing step of changing the distance between said focusing lens and said image pickup sensor based on the focus evaluation value calculated by the process at the calculation step; and

a synthesis step of synthesizing a plurality of image pickup signals picked up by the process at the image pickup step, the synthesis step synthesizing the picked up plurality of image signals into an image signal of one field or selecting one of the picked up plurality of image signals,

wherein the cycle of the image vertical synchronizing signal and N times (N being an integer) the cycle in which the focus evaluation value is calculated by the process at the calculation step are synchronized with each other, and A times, $[[()]]A$ being an integer $[(I)]$, the cycle of the image vertical synchronizing signal and B times, $[[()]]B$ being an integer $[(I)]$, the cycle in which the distance is changed by the process at the changing step are synchronized with each other where the integer A and the integer B satisfy a relationship of $B > A$.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~A recording medium on or in which a computer-readable~~ computer-readable medium for recording a program for an automatic focusing control process for an automatic focusing control apparatus having a focusing lens and an image pickup sensor ~~is recorded,~~ the program comprising:

an image pickup step of picking up an image of a subject in synchronization with the cycle of an image vertical synchronizing signal in a cycle which is one-Nth, $[[()]]N$ being an integer $[(I)]$, of the cycle of the image vertical synchronizing signal;

a calculation step of calculating a focus evaluation value for performing automatic focusing based on an image pickup signal picked up by the process at the image pickup step;

a changing step of changing the distance between said focusing lens and said image pickup sensor based on the focus evaluation value calculated by the process at the calculation step; and

a synthesis step of synthesizing a plurality of image pickup signals picked up by the process at the image pickup step, the synthesis step synthesizing the picked up plurality of image signals into an image signal of one field or selecting one of the picked up plurality of image signals.

wherein the cycle of the image vertical synchronizing signal and N times, $[[()]]N$ being an integer $[[()]]$, the cycle in which the focus evaluation value is calculated by the process at the calculation step are synchronized with each other, and A times, $[[()]]A$ being an integer $[[()]]$, the cycle of the image vertical synchronizing signal and B times, $[[()]]B$ being an integer $[[()]]$, the cycle in which the distance is changed by said changing section are synchronized with each other where the integer A and the integer B satisfy a relationship of $B > A$.

6. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:

at least one processor; and

at least one memory, coupled to the at least one processor, the memory storing a program configured to cause a computer to perform an automatic focusing control process for an automatic focusing control apparatus having a focusing lens and an image pickup sensor, said program causing the computer to execute:

an image pickup step of picking up an image of a subject in
synchronization with the cycle of an image vertical synchronizing signal in a cycle which is one-
Nth, $\left[\left(\frac{1}{N}\right)\right]$ N being an integer, of the cycle of the image vertical synchronizing signal;

a calculation step of calculating a focus evaluation value for performing
automatic focusing based on an image pickup signal picked up by the process at the image
pickup step;

a changing step of changing the distance between said focusing lens and
said image pickup sensor based on the focus evaluation value calculated by the process at the
calculation step; and

a synthesis step of synthesizing a plurality of image pickup signals picked
up by the process at the image pickup step, the synthesis step synthesizing the picked up plurality
of image signals into an image signal of one field or selecting one of the picked up plurality of
image signals.

wherein the cycle of the image vertical synchronizing signal and N times,
 $\left[\left(\frac{1}{N}\right)\right]$ N being an integer, the cycle in which the focus evaluation value is calculated by the
process at the calculation step are synchronized with each other, and A times, $\left[\left(\frac{1}{A}\right)\right]$ A being an
integer, the cycle of the image vertical synchronizing signal and B times, $\left[\left(\frac{1}{B}\right)\right]$ B being an
integer, the cycle in which the distance is changed by said changing section are synchronized
with each other where the integer A and the integer B satisfy a relationship of $B > A$.